

# Energy Freedom and Public Safety

## Protecting your family on the road

There are other dangers on the road aside from drunk drivers. Some highways and roads are poorly designed. Others are dangerous because of traffic gridlock.

We passed reforms and a supplemental transportation budget to fix deadly highways, reduce traffic congestion and put more state troopers on the road.



I've served on the Transportation Committee for six years now and am proud that we broke through the partisan gridlock these past few years in Olympia so we can finally reduce the transportation gridlock here in the 47th district and all across the state.

It's good for our economy, our quality of life and for public safety. I'll continue working for transportation improvements in South King county next session.



State Representative **Geoff Simpson**  
47th Legislative District

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Energy  
Freedom  
and  
Public  
Safety

# Energy Freedom and Public Safety



State Representative  
**Geoff Simpson**  
47th Legislative District

Dear neighbors,

Although this was a short session of the Legislature, we passed big reforms on energy freedom and public safety – including tough new laws to lock up sex offenders and drunk drivers.

This newsletter is my chance to tell you about those issues, and a chance to hear your ideas, comments and questions.

Thank you again for taking the time to be an active and informed citizen.

It's an honor and a privilege to represent you in the House of Representatives, and I look forward to hearing from you or seeing you back home now that the Legislature has adjourned.

Sincerely,

Rep. Geoff Simpson, Covington  
47th Legislative District



## Keeping In Touch



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## ‘59-day miracle’

The Seattle P-I called this session of the Legislature a “59-day miracle,” so I want to tell you a little about the big picture before giving you details about energy, education and crime.

Washington state has a legislature of part-time citizen lawmakers, and we only meet for 60 days (105 days when we write the two-year budget). I’m happy to tell you we passed all our laws and adjourned in 59 days – one day early – for the first time in decades.

The newspapers called it a miracle session because not only did we get done early, we passed huge reforms that had been stuck in political gridlock for years:

- reforming the alphabet soup of regional transportation – this will get us closer to fixing local highways and arterials;
- finding historic compromises on tough issues like medical malpractice and unemployment insurance;
- moving the primary election a month earlier to give our men and women in uniform more time to send in their ballots;
- helping more kids get health care, part of our goal to make sure every child in Washington state has health coverage by 2010;
- eliminating the \$5 fee at our state parks; and
- reforming the statewide test for students (the WASL) to make sure it gives every student a fair shot at success.

We also passed a budget that puts nearly \$1 billion in the bank for next year.

I’m proud of what we accomplished this session, and I want to thank all of the citizens who took the time to get informed and involved. You made a difference.



## Energy Freedom

Our nation – and Washington state – is addicted to foreign oil. That addiction hurts our economy, our environment and our future.

There is an alternative. Instead of sending \$9 billion a year from Washington state to Russia, Saudi Arabia and Iran, we can help our local farmers by paying them to grow more and more of our fuel.

Ending our addiction to foreign oil is the boldest – and smartest – decision we could make. Clean biofuels (ethanol and biodiesel) are safe and proven to work.



I’m proud to tell you Washington now requires biofuels sold at our pumps – and grown by our farmers. The big oil companies fought against it because it’ll eat into their profits. But I’d rather support our state’s farm economy than the price gougers at ExxonMobil.

We took bold steps toward Energy Freedom this session by:

- Building five seed crushers so our local farmers can grow crops that create biodiesel;
- \$7.5 million for a biomass project to turn wood chips into energy;
- Millions in funds for competitive grants to develop new technology to help us achieve energy independence; and
- Giving you a choice at the pump, with a new law requiring 2 percent of all gasoline sold be ethanol and 2 percent of diesel sold be biodiesel by 2008.

Next session, I’ll continue the fight to wean our economy from foreign oil.

## Protecting your family from sex offenders

As a firefighter, I’ve been the first responder to crime scenes. I know what it’s like to try to save the life of a crime victim, to provide medical treatment to a rape victim, or to talk to family members after somebody gets killed by a drunk driver or other criminal.

So I take the issue of public safety personally, not just as a firefighter and a lawmaker, but as a father.

To protect our families from sex offenders, we passed 18 tough new laws this session.

We worked with everybody – police and prosecutors, Republicans and Democrats, victims and victim advocates – to find answers.

### ■ Tough new laws we passed

The worst sex offender is the one who preys on children. We focused on catching more of these lowlifes, convicting more of them and protecting our kids from them.

New laws we passed include:

- 25 years to life for child rape or molestation in the first degree committed by strangers or teachers, coaches and other trusted authority figures.
- GPS trackers on sex offenders who register as homeless and have offended against a child;



- making child pornography convictions grounds to register as a sex offender, so local families can be informed and protect themselves.

We also made it a crime to communicate with a minor for immoral purposes through e-mail or a computer, because we know a lot of child molesters try to groom their victims in chat rooms and by e-mail.

All of these measures had the support of police officers, prosecutors, victims’ advocates and the Republican Attorney General.

To help crime victims, we also passed new laws and added funding in two key budgets:

- Crime Victims Compensation Program (\$1.8 million).
- Sexual assault victims advocates’ programs (\$2 million).



## Protecting your family from drunk drivers

Nationwide, after 10 p.m., one out of five drivers on the road is impaired by alcohol. That’s a scary statistic, because every one of those drivers is just a center line away from smashing into your

average family driving home from dinner.

What’s worse is that drunk and reckless drivers help make our roads and highways much more dangerous than they should be. Your family is three times more likely to get maimed or killed driving than at the hands of other criminals.

I’m serious about drunk drivers and will continue to fight hard to get tough on anybody who drinks and endangers others on the road.

In 2004, I passed a law requiring ignition interlock devices on drunk driver’s cars that has already resulted in one of the lowest drunk driving rates in the nation. You can’t get a license unless you prove the interlock is installed, and you can’t start your car if you’re drunk and have an interlock.

But some drunk drivers continue to drive without a license or interlock device.

The biggest problem today is those chronic alcoholic and drunk drivers, the ones who won’t stop no matter how many times they get arrested, have their license taken away or spend time in the county jail.

We got tougher this session on habitual drunk drivers by making repeat drunk driving a felony. Now instead of being back on the streets in a few days, the worst offenders will be in prison for a couple of years.

It’s one more good step, but as long as we have drunk drivers, we need to keep finding ways to stop them from getting behind the wheel.